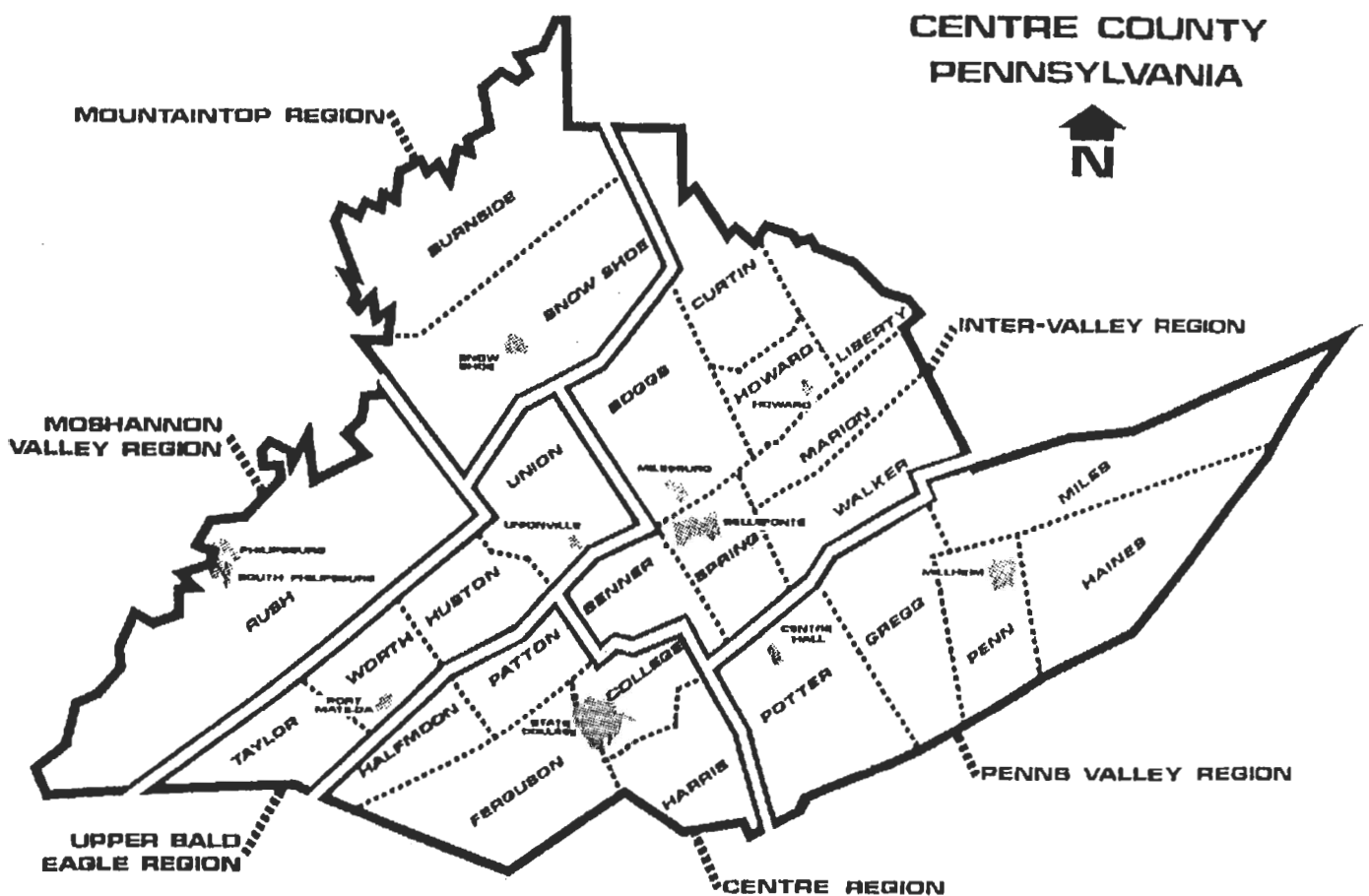


# CENTRE COUNTY SUBDIVISION AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY REPORT - 2002 -



CENTRE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
CENTRE COUNTY PLANNING OFFICE

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## Centre County Board of Commissioners - 2002

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Keith Bierly, *Commissioner*  
Connie E. Lucas, *Commissioner*

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Stephen "Tom" Letterman	Lower Bald Eagle Valley Region
Jack Shannon	Moshannon Valley Region

## Centre County Planning Office - 2002

Robert B. Donaldson, *Director*  
Robert B. Jacobs, *Assistant Director*  
Anson C. Burwell, *Subdivision and Land Development Planner*  
Christopher D. Schnure, *Assistant Subdivision and Land Development Planner*  
Matt Milliron, *Community Water Systems Coordinator*  
Beth A. Thoma, *Data Management*  
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Linda Marshall, *Senior Planner, Comprehensive Plan*  
Kelly L. Grubbs, *Junior Planner, Comprehensive Plan*  
Mary L. Leathers, *Secretary III*  
Stacy J. Mann, *Bookkeeper/Clerk*  
Greg G. Luna, *GIS Technician (Contracted from Penn State using "in-kind" funds)*  
Elizabeth A. Tuck, *Research Technologist (Contracted from Penn State using "in-kind" funds)*

## Retired Senior Volunteer Program Volunteer - 2002

James V. Frick

NOTE: Information contained in this report can be made available in other forms as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

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Released: May, 2003

## – INTRODUCTION –

The *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code* (commonly called the MPC) requires Planning Commissions to file an annual report with the governing body at the beginning of each year. The MPC does not specify the format of the annual report; however, each Planning Commission is required to provide a listing of activities regarding reviews and actions relative to their administrative duties.

Per the above, the Centre County Planning Commission performs a dual function concerning its involvement with subdivision and land development activity. The Planning Commission staff must administer and enforce the *Centre County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance*, applicable throughout much of Centre County (reference Figure 4 on page 8); and they must also receive, review or monitor for review all plans originating from those municipalities having adopted their own subdivision and land development regulations. Presently, there are nine (9) municipalities within the County that administer their own subdivision and land development ordinances, with the remaining twenty-seven (27) municipalities under the jurisdiction of the County's Ordinance. Also, in cooperation with the County Recorder of Deeds Office, the Planning Office monitors all subdivision and land development plans to verify that they have been properly approved by the appropriate municipal officials prior to recording.

The Centre County Planning Office is also required to charge processing fees for the review of applicable subdivision and land development plans and for the reviews of applicable Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection Sewage Planning Modules (per the *Pennsylvania Sewage Facilities Act*). Accordingly, processing and review fees received in 2002 totaled \$40,595.87 (reference page 10 for additional information).

This report will attempt to summarize the subdivision and land development activity in Centre County over the past several years and analyze the distribution of activity throughout the County's thirty-six (36) municipalities during 2002. Data has been collected and compiled to help show various characteristics and trends that have occurred in the County and to demonstrate the potential impact of the characteristics and trends.

Further, this annual report should be viewed as a mechanism for an open line of communication between the Planning Commission and local municipalities, as well as a readily available planning tool to help inform the general public.

## – GENERAL REVIEW –

Centre County's subdivision and land development activity has closely followed the recurrent peaks and valleys of the nation's economy throughout the several years data has been compiled and analyzed. The economic climate evidenced in the late 1970's led to a recession of the early 1980's, but later rebounded to that of record highs in the late 1980's. More recent events have shown a leveling trend per the data compiled in the 1990's and into the new millennium. Even with recent events such as the war on terrorism and a sluggish national economy the numbers compiled indicate that this continued plateau shows a pattern of continued and sustained steady growth countywide. Per data shown in Figure 1, New Files Created, and Figure 2, Plans Recorded, the County's subdivision and land development activity closely follows this trend.

The Centre County municipalities (i.e., townships or boroughs) that presently have their own local subdivision and land development regulations can be identified by referring to Figure 3, Recorded Subdivision / Land Development Plans for 2002, and Figure 4, County and Municipal Planning Controls. The County Planning Office assists many of these municipalities with plan reviews prior to final action. In that segment of the County called the Centre Region, (i.e., State College Borough and the surrounding townships) the plan reviews are usually performed by the Centre Regional Planning Agency in cooperation with the Centre County Planning Office, this based on an "agreement of service" previously executed between the Centre County Board of Commissioners and the Centre Region Council of Governments.

The data compiled in Figure 3, Recorded Subdivision / Land Development Plans for 2002 represents the total number of files created, as well as the total number of plot plans placed on record in the Centre County Recorder of Deeds Office. The plot plans are further categorized into three groups: (1) subdivision activity, including a subtotal of recorded subdivision plans, number of acres subdivided, and number of lots created; (2) land development activity, including the subtotal of recorded land development plans, number of acres developed, and number of units created; and, (3) a subtotal of "miscellaneous plans" (i.e., plans placed on record that depict replots, lot additions, reclassifications or plot plans "approved for recording purposes only" such as tract surveys and survey corrections).

The data compiled in Figure 5, Ten Year Comparison reflects a listing of County totals. For example, the County totals for 2002 show that 249 plans were placed on record creating 522 lots and 1,794 units on 5,729.45 acres of land. For a comparison, the total acreage either subdivided or involved as part of a land development activity during 2002 computes to approximately nine square miles, roughly an area two times the size of Borough of State College.

The previously described information show characteristics and trends that become significant in that they translate into direct impacts on the County. For instance, the majority of the approved lots or units will result in new housing and additional people. This figure will not always represent additional “new” persons at the County level due to internal relocation within the County; however, at the municipal level the additional people will often represent new permanent residents or new persons residing on a seasonal basis.

This increase of new residents at the municipal level will automatically increase the demand for local facilities and services -- such as police, fire, and ambulance service. Other affected areas might include greater demands placed on local recreational and medical facilities. Impacts can also occur to local transportation systems as well as school facilities. These additional demands translate into additional costs.

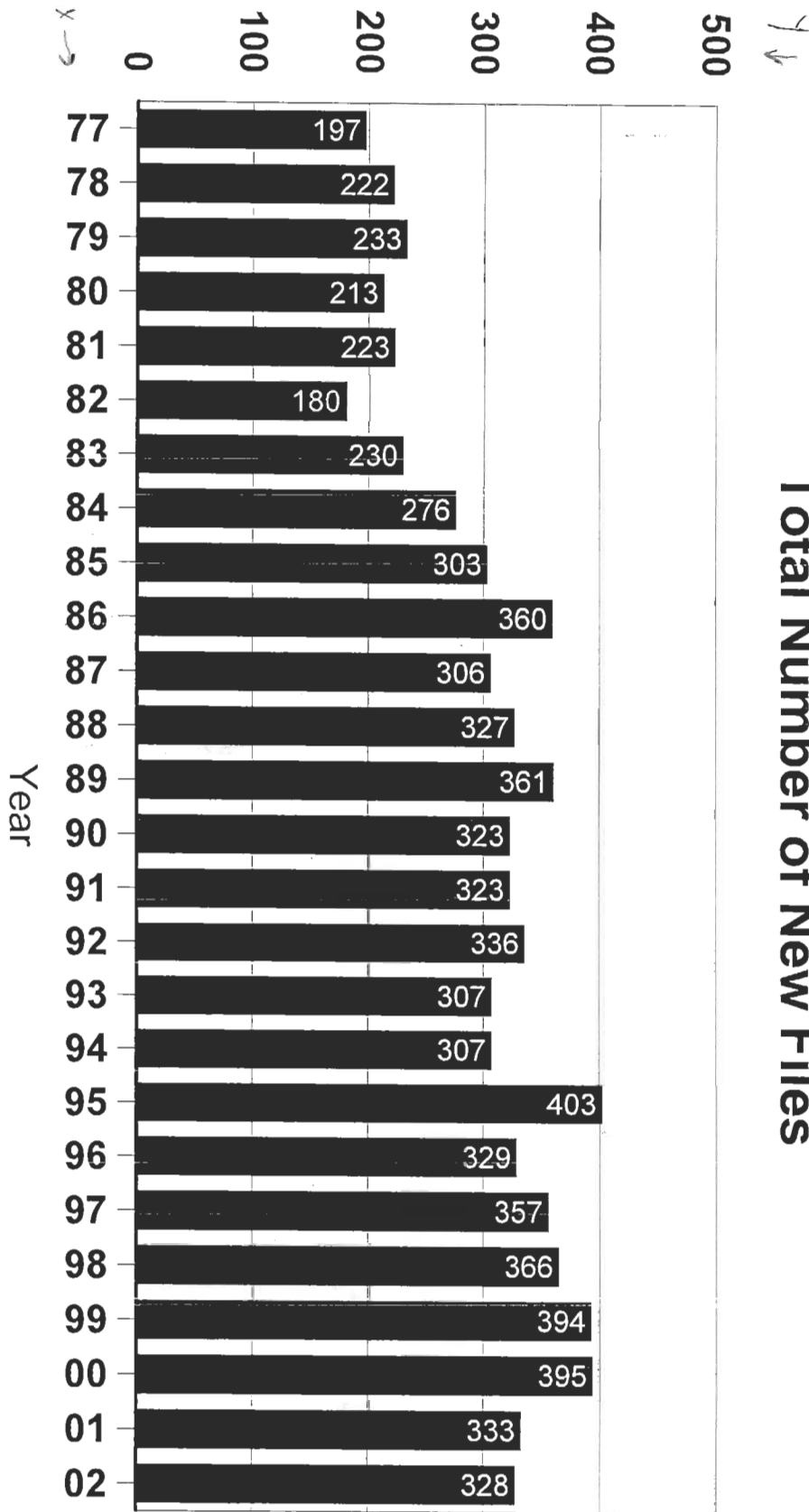
Another way to look at new development and the resulting additional people is that it represents not only a cost but also a potential benefit in the form of an increase in the local and County tax base, as well as additional employees and consumers, which help improve economic conditions for our local industrial and business communities.

In reference to the above, it should be important to each municipality, as well as the County, to assure that the benefits to be realized by development activity outweigh negative impacts that might result from an increase in demand on local facilities and services; and, as a planning goal, all parties should make a concerted effort to maintain and foster mutual coexistence between people’s needs and the natural environment.

### **– ITEMS OF NOTE –**

- \* The total number of land development units (1,794) almost doubled from the previous “high water mark” of 902 units in 1994, primarily due to developments in State College Borough (such as the Penn State University’s East View Terrace Housing project, comprising seven buildings containing a total of 810 units) and developments in Patton Township (such as Phase 1 of The Village at Penn State, 286 units, and the Northbrook Greens Land Development, 168 units).
  
- \* A significant decrease in total acres subdivided (5,601.86) was observed for 2002, with a slightly lower than average total number of lots created (522). This can be primarily attributed to the lack of seasonal or recreational use subdivision activity, most notably being that the majority of property owned by Gulf USA (lands primarily located in Snow Shoe Township) have experienced multiple lot subdivision activity in recent years past.

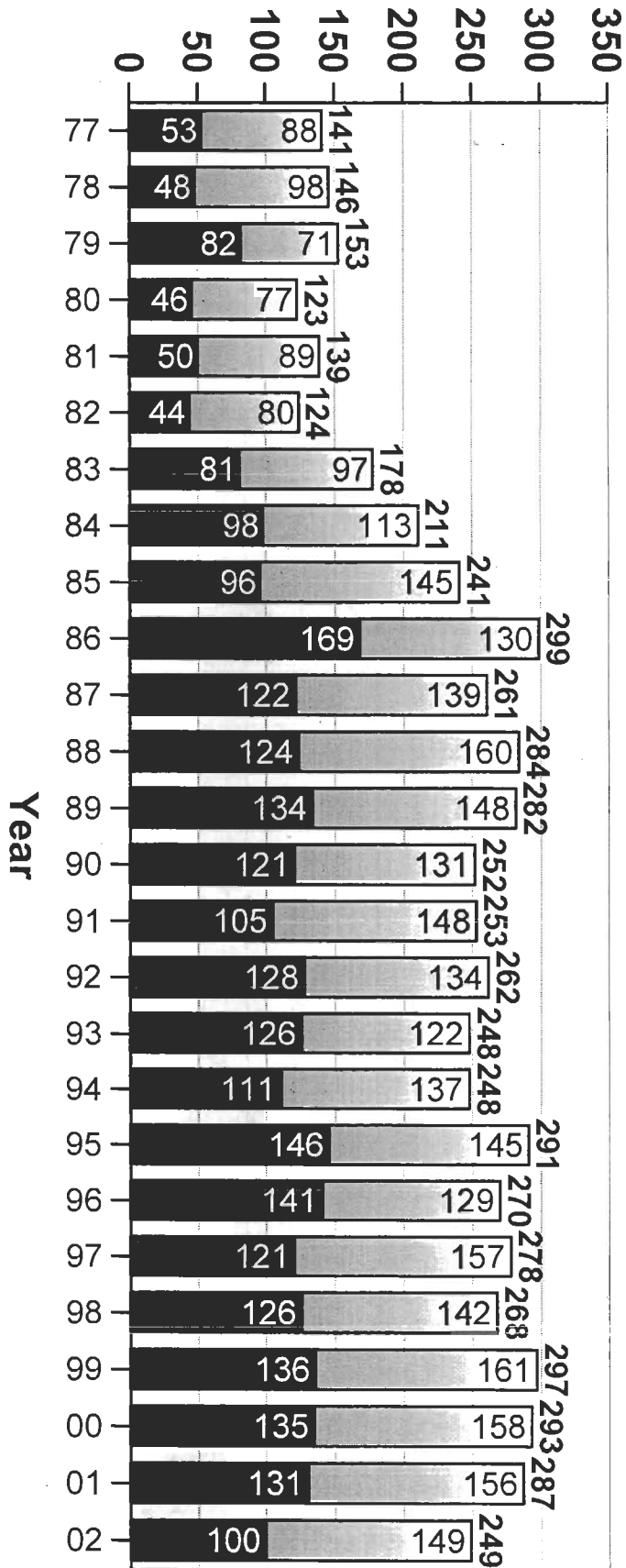
- Figure 1 -  
Number of Files



- FIGURE 1 -  
Total Number of New Files

- Figure 2 -

Number of Plans



- FIGURE 2 -  
Number of Recorded Plot Plans

Local County

**- Figure 3 -  
2002 Data  
RECORDED SUBDIVISION / LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS FOR 2002  
(Including Miscellaneous Plans\*)**

Municipalities	New Files Created	Total Record Plans	-- SUBDIVISION / LAND DEVELOPMENT DATA --							
			Sub. Plans	Acres Subdivided	Lots Created	Land Dev. Plans	Acres Developed	Units Created	Misc. Plans*	
<b>Centre Region</b>										
#	State College Borough	27	31	0	0.00	0	24	15.98	1,125	7
#	College Township	37	23	3	8.03	5	11	21.15	12	9
#	Ferguson Township	34	35	11	663.33	75	16	15.77	40	8
#	Halfmoon Township	10	7	5	242.67	25	0	2.06	0	2
#	Harris Township	5	5	4	61.07	8	1	0.00	1	0
#	Patton Township	38	30	4	122.77	76	16	55.27	524	10
	<b>Regional Total</b>	151	131	27	1,097.87	189	68	110.23	1,702	36
<b>Inter-Valley Region</b>										
#	Bellefonte Borough	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0
	Howard Borough	1	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0
	Milesburg Borough	1	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0
	Benner Township	9	6	3	98.84	89	1	1.77	2	2
#	Boggs Township <sup>1</sup>	8	6	4	629.87	14	0	0.00	0	2
	Curtin Township	2	3	1	172.83	2	1	0.42	19	1
	Howard Township	3	2	1	16.11	2	0	0.00	0	1
#	Liberty Township	4	2	2	50.30	7	0	0.00	0	0
	Marion Township	5	4	3	212.15	3	0	0.00	0	1
#	Spring Township	16	14	2	34.36	19	5	5.64	51	7
	Walker Township	18	8	5	102.55	28	0	2.28	0	3
	<b>Regional Total</b>	67	45	21	1,317.01	164	7	10.11	72	17
<b>Moshannon Valley Region</b>										
	Philipsburg Borough	3	3	2	6.41	3	0	0.00	0	1
	South Philipsburg Boro.	1	1	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	1
	Rush Township	18	8	5	119.92	28	0	3.80	0	3
	<b>Regional Total</b>	22	12	7	126.33	31	0	3.80	0	5



**- Figure 3, continued  
2002 Data -- continued**

Municipalities	New Files Created	Total Record Plans	-- SUBDIVISION / LAND DEVELOPMENT DATA --							Misc. Plans*
			Sub. Plans	Acres Subdivided	Lots Created	Land Develop. Plans	Acres Developed	Units Created		
<b>Mountaintop Region</b>										
Snow Shoe Borough	1	2	1	0.78	2	0	0.00	0	1	
Burnside Township	0	1	1	583.99	27	0	0.00	0	0	
Snow Shoe Township	8	7	4	71.32	9	0	0.00	0	3	
<b>Regional Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>656.09</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	
<b>Penns Valley Region</b>										
Centre Hall Borough	1	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	
Millheim Borough	2	2	1	2.12	2	1	0.60	9	0	
Gregg Township	13	5	3	343.32	19	1	0.26	8	1	
Haines Township	12	2	1	3.99	1	0	0.00	0	1	
Miles Township	9	6	5	597.28	11	0	0.00	0	1	
Penn Township	6	8	8	381.14	30	0	0.00	0	0	
Potter Township	17	12	7	399.28	17	1	1.47	1	4	
<b>Regional Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>1,727.13</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2.33</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7</b>	
<b>Upper Bald Eagle Region</b>										
Port Matilda Borough	1	1	1	0.40	2	0	0.00	0	0	
Unionville Borough	0	0	0	0.00	0	0	0.00	0	0	
Huston Township	3	7	4	403.30	8	1	1.11	2	2	
Taylor Township	2	3	2	229.99	7	0	0.00	0	1	
Union Township	6	2	1	31.45	1	0	0.00	0	1	
Worth Township	7	3	1	12.30	2	0	0.00	0	2	
<b>Regional Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>677.44</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1.11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	
<b>County Totals</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>5,601.87</b>	<b>522</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>127.58</b>	<b>1,794</b>	<b>75</b>	

\* = Miscellaneous Plans:  
 Replotted Lots, Lot Additions, Reclassifications, and Plans "For Recording Purposes Only" (e.g., Tract Surveys, Survey Corrections, etc.)  
 # = Municipalities having their own Subdivision/Land Development Regulations.  
 1 = Boggs Township repealed their Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance on November 6, 2001. Two (2) proposals were received prior to November 6, 2001, and were approved by Boggs Township and placed on record in the Recorder of Deeds Office during the 2002 calendar year.

**COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL PLANNING CONTROLS  
2002**

<b>CENTRE COUNTY</b>	<b>Adopted Comprehensive Plan</b>	<b>Planning Commission</b>	<b>Municipal SALDO Applies</b>	<b>County SALDO Ordinance Applies</b>	<b>Zoning Ordinance</b>	<b>Zoning Hearing Board</b>	<b>Building Permit Ordinance</b>	<b>Federal Flood Insurance Program</b>	<b>Ag Security Area</b>	<b>Storm-Water Ordinance</b>
<b>CENTRE REGION</b>										
State College Borough	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
College Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Ferguson Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Halfmoon Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Harris Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Patton Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>INTER-VALLEY REGION</b>										
Belleville Borough	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
Howard Borough	X	X			X	X	X	X		
Milesburg Borough	X	X			X	X	X	X		
Benner Township	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	
Boggs Township	X	X			X	X	X	X		X
Curtin Township	X	X			X	X	X	X		
Howard Township	X	X			X	X	X	X		
Liberty Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
Matton Township	X	X			X	X	X	X		
Spring Township	X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X
Walker Township	X	X			X	X	X	X		
<b>MOSHANNON VALLEY REGION</b>										
Phillipsburg Borough	X	X			X	X	X	X		
South Phillipsburg Borough					X	X	X	X		
Rush Township		X					X	X		
<b>MOUNTAINTOP REGION</b>										
Snow Shoe Borough	X	X			X	X	X	X		
Burnside Township	X	X			X	X	X	X		
Snow Shoe Township	X	X			X	X	X	X		
<b>PENNS VALLEY REGION</b>										
Centre Hill Borough	X	X			X	X	X	X		
Millheim Borough	X	X			X	X	X	X		
Gregg Township	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	X
Haines Township	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	
Miles Township					X	X	X	X	X	
Penn Township					X	X	X	X	X	
Potter Township	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	
<b>UPPER BALD EAGLE REGION</b>										
Port Matilda Borough	X	X			X	X	X	X		
Unionville Borough					X	X	X	X		
Huston Township		X			X	X	X	X	X	
Taylor Township					X	X	X	X	X	
Union Township	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	
Worth Township	X	X			X	X	X	X	X	

SALDO -- Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

- Figure 5 -

**- TEN YEAR COMPARISON -  
RECORDED SUBDIVISION/LAND DEVELOPMENT PLANS 1993-2002  
(Including Miscellaneous Plans\*)**

Municipalities	New Files Created	Total Record Plans	-- SUBDIVISION/LAND DEVELOPMENT DATA --							Misc. Plans*
			Sub. Plans	Acres Subdivided	Lots Created	Land Dev. Plans	Acres Developed	Units Created		
2002	328	249	95	5,601.87	522	79	127.58	1,794	75	
2001	333	287	131	9,326.42	618	69	104.79	688	87	
2000	395	293	118	7,148.81	622	69	82.68	365	106	
1999	394	297	147	12,766.06	683	68	192.68	899	82	
1998	366	268	120	6,405.10	618	59	73.42	773	89	
1997	357	278	138	6,827.16	635	73	90.31	462	67	
1996	329	270	146	5,732.09	529	48	163.16	763	76	
1995	403	291	160	6,544.00	816	45	94.45	530	86	
1994	307	248	142	3,739.31	498	37	108.44	902	69	
1993	307	248	145	8,364.20	740	43	38.30	201	60	

\* = Miscellaneous Plans:  
Replotted Lots, Lot Additions, Reclassifications, and Plans "For Recording Purposes Only" (e.g., Tract Surveys, Survey Corrections, etc.)

- Figure 5 -

## PROCESSING FEES

Subdivision & Land Development Review Fees Received	1999	2000	2001	2002
County Jurisdiction	\$9,890.00	\$15,095.00	\$27,810.00	\$30,785.00
Local Jurisdiction	\$1,607.50	\$1,625.00	\$1,480.00	\$1,136.50
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	<b>\$11,497.50</b>	<b>\$16,720.00</b>	<b>\$29,290.00</b>	<b>\$31,921.50</b>
<b>DEP Planning Module Review Fees Received</b>	<b>\$1,350.00</b>	<b>\$1,000.00</b>	<b>\$1,000.00</b>	<b>\$925.00</b>
<b>Engineer Review/Inspection Fees Received*</b>	<b>\$2,821.87</b>	<b>\$7,984.86</b>	<b>\$8,071.92</b>	<b>\$7,749.37</b>
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$15,669.37</b>	<b>\$25,704.86</b>	<b>\$38,361.92</b>	<b>\$40,595.87</b>

**\* NOTE:** Applicants submitting plans under the jurisdiction of the County's Ordinance that involve required engineering details must execute a *Memorandum of Understanding* with the Centre County Board of Commissioners (and the local municipality, when applicable). This agreement represents a commitment that the applicant shall reimburse the county/municipality for all actual costs of the engineering services provided by the county/municipality in the formal processing of the plan (i.e., engineering reviews and site inspections).

## – CONCLUSION –

The administration and enforcement of the *Centre County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance* is one of many major tasks entrusted to the Centre County Planning Commission and staff. During 2002 approximately one third of the total staff time was devoted to subdivision and land development planning activities.

Staff demands and the corresponding workload have shown a sizable increase over the years due in part to the periodic changes in the *Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code* (MPC), specifically related to both the content and processing of subdivision and land development plans, as well as continuing changes to the review requirements concerning the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) *Sewage Planning Module For Land Development*. Also, analysis of past and recent characteristics and trends point to subdivision and land development activities continuing at a similar elevated level of growth, especially in those areas that fall under the jurisdiction of the County's Ordinance and that are within or adjacent to existing population centers and as affected by the growth occurring within the Centre Region.

The importance of the Planning Commission's role is evident when one considers direct and indirect impacts resulting from subdivision and land development activity within the County, and as additional activity occurs with presently undeveloped lands converted to other forms of land use, the potential is created to overburden local facilities and services; therefore, the Planning Commission's role is increased both in magnitude and importance. Also, if favorable economic conditions remain (as indicated by low lending rates and a steady demand for housing and commercial sites) then a continued high level of subdivision and land development activity is projected to occur for the next several years.

Accordingly, the staff will continue to monitor and report various characteristics and trends associated with subdivision and land development activity in an effort to determine the significance and impact on the County and to assist in the orderly and efficient development of the County's future growth.

## – DEFINITIONS –

**Land Development:** Any of the following activities:

- (1) The improvement of one lot or two or more contiguous lots, tracts, or parcels of land for any purpose involving:
  - (a) A group of two or more residential or nonresidential buildings, whether proposed initially or cumulatively, or a single nonresidential building on a lot or lots regardless of the number of occupants or tenure; or,
  - (b) The division or allocation of land or space, whether initially or cumulatively, between or among two or more existing or prospective occupants by means of, or for the purpose of streets, common areas, leaseholds, condominiums, building groups, or other features.
- (2) A subdivision of land.

**Lot Addition:** A parcel of land that is conveyed, sold, or transferred to an existing lot of record for the sole purpose of increasing its lot size.

**Miscellaneous Plan:** A recorded plot plan that depicts lot additions, replotted lots, reclassifications and/or represents a plan approved “for recording purposes only” (e.g., a miscellaneous declaration plan, tract survey plan, and/or a correction of survey plan).

**New Files Created:** For record keeping purposes, new files are created whenever the following occurs:

- a) Public contact resulting in correspondence from the County Planning Office related to the administration of the County Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance; or,
- b) Reviews and/or acknowledgments of subdivision and land development plans, as generated from municipalities having their own local subdivision/land development ordinances, resulting in correspondence from the County Planning Office.

**Record Plan (or) Recorded Plan:** The original plot plan as approved, acknowledged as such by approval signatures and recorded in the County Recorder of Deeds Office.

**Replot:** The change of lot lines between lots of separate ownership or between subdivided lots of common ownership, not creating any additional “new” lots.

**Resubdivision:** The subdivision of an approved “lot of record” into two or more lots.

**Subdivision:** The division or re-division of a lot, tract, or parcel of land by any means into two or more lots, tracts, parcels, or other divisions of land, including changes in existing lot lines for the purpose, whether immediate or future, or lease, partition by the court for distribution to heirs or devisee, transfer of ownership, or building or lot development; provided, however, that the subdivision by lease of land for agricultural purposes into parcels of more than ten acres, not involving any new street or easement of access or any residential dwelling, shall be exempted.